

## **History of Volume 4, Basin/Segment Boundaries and Inventories State of Louisiana Water Quality Management Plan**

In the late 1930s, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (DW&F) established a Water Pollution Control Division, and initially two people were assigned the task of monitoring water quality for fisheries activities within Louisiana. In 1940, the Louisiana Legislature created the Stream Control Commission and placed it in the DW&F. In the early 1970s, the Water Pollution Control Division reported to the Stream Control Commission. The division staff had grown to 19 people.

In 1979, the Legislature passed Act 449, forming the Office of Environmental Affairs (OEA), which was placed in the Department of Natural Resources and included what was formerly known as the Water Pollution Control Division. In 1983, additional legislation creating the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) passed the Legislature. The Office of Water Resources was created within DEQ and encompassed the Water Pollution Control Division. The Louisiana DEQ continues to evolve, and today responsibility for surface water quality management rests with the Water Quality Assessment Division in the Office of Environmental Assessment.

In the late 1970s, in response to the Clean Water Act of 1972, the Water pollution Control Division hired contractors to develop river basin management plans. By 1980, each contractor had produced several plans for a total of 12, representing all of Louisiana's river basins. These plans constituted the State's Water Quality Management Plan and divided the state's 12 river basins into management segments (watersheds) identified by a 4-digit code. In the 1980s, these watersheds were further subdivided into 6-digit subsegments to enable tighter focus on these areas, and they were therefore better described hydrologically. These subdivisions were adjusted based on field observations, recommendations presented in the basin plans, and hydrology, especially with regard to artificial structures such as dams and weirs.

In 1985, the Water Pollution Control Division decided to revise and restructure the Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP). The WQMP was converted from a 12-basin-plan structure to a multi-volume structure, with each volume addressing or representing a required management plan component, as outlined in the federal regulations (40 CFR130.6). The 12 basin plans contained a great deal of duplicated information on features that are similar throughout much of Louisiana, such as climatology and geology. Volume 4 of the WQMP was extracted from the basin plans to condense this repetitive information for the reader while preserving information on characteristics unique to each basin. Volume 4 describes each water quality management basin and all subsegments within each basin. It also gives broad descriptions of the geology, geography, climatology, and hydrology of the basins. It is in two parts, text description and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) coverage. The text description is undergoing a major revision and will be available on the department's web site as part of the Water Quality Management Plan when completed. The GIS coverage is available on the

department's web site as part of the Geographic Information Systems Make-A-Map feature. The Office of Environmental Assessment, Water Quality Assessment Division develops and maintains this document in conjunction with LDEQ's Geographic Information Systems.